

Good morning. My name is Lawrence Reichard, and I live in Belfast. I am a freelance journalist, and I have for seven years written extensively on the now defunct Nordic Aquafarms fish farm project and on aquaculture in general.

I am here today because I am concerned that Maine's state government, under the leadership of Governor Mills, is too often siding with large and environmentally destructive corporate projects, at the expense of Maine's environment and Maine's people, and sometimes against the expressed wishes of a large majority of Mainers, as happened with the CMP corridor project, when fully 60% of Maine voters rejected the proposal.

As you may know, many of us in Belfast believe Governor Mills inappropriately interfered in the state permitting project for the \$500 million Nordic Aquafarms project, and Nordic received all its state permits despite its failure to establish ownership of all needed lands, a prerequisite for even applying for the permits.

And now we're seeing something similar with Sears Island. With Sears Island, the state has repeatedly issued misleading public statements supporting the placement of the state's wind-power project on Sears Island. In these statements, the state has sometimes failed to mention the Mack Point alternative, has failed to mention that cost estimates from Mack Point owner Sprague Energy are substantially lower than those of the state, and or has failed to even state that Sprague's estimates vary from the state's estimates. This does not produce an informed citizenry. Rather, it is a way to ram a project through an uninformed public.

There has also been a failure on the part of the state to consider anything but fiscal impact. But industrialization of Sears Island would have effects far beyond fiscal impact. Sears Island is a major transit point for migrating birds, and is at least temporary home to more than half the bird species ever identified in Maine.

And bird populations are already under heavy pressure, from everything from diminishing habitat to the collapse of insect populations.

And then there are the recreational benefits of Sears Island. I very much urge you to take a walk on Sears Island if you haven't done so, and if you do, you may see, as I have, that it is impossible to industrialize part of the island without

effectively destroying the entire island's environment.

These are all factors that go well above and beyond just fiscal impacts, and they should be considered.

All of this is why this legislation is so important, and I urge you to vote for LD 226.

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